

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1        (Original): A sling for treating urinary incontinence in a patient comprising:

first and second major surfaces,

a pair of end portions,

a support portion for placement in a therapeutically effective position relative to a physiological environment intended to be supported, the support portion having an axially elongate mesh, and repair of ends, and

repositioning means, associated with the sling, for transferring sling tightening or sling loosening forces along the sling to afford effective, permanent repositioning of the sling without adversely affecting the therapeutic effect of the sling.

Claim 2        (Original): A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling is constructed for treating female incontinence with a surgical procedure that includes a vaginal incision, and the repositioning means is without any structure that extends through the vaginal incision.

Claim 3        (Canceled)

Claim 4        (Original): A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling is initially placed via an access incision such as a vaginal incision, and the repositioning means affords post operative loosening of the sling after the vaginal incision is closed without any subsequent vaginal incision and without any structure extending through the original vaginal incision.

Claim 5 (Original): A sling according to claim 1 wherein the repositioning means transfers sling tightening or sling loosening forces along the sling while avoiding permanent deformation of the sling.

Claim 6 (Original) A sling according to claim 1, wherein the repositioning means comprises at least one filament threaded along the mesh.

Claim 7 (Original): A sling according to claim 6, wherein the filament is attached to the mesh at the ends of the support portion.

Claim 8 (Original): A sling according to claim 1, wherein the repositioning means comprises at least one filament integrally woven in the mesh.

Claim 9 (Original): A sling according to claim 1, wherein the mesh has a length, and the repositioning means comprises a plurality of filaments that are each threaded along substantially the entire length of the mesh.

Claim 10 (Original) A sling according to claim 9 wherein the filaments extend from an edge of the support portion to the other edge of the support portion.

Claim 11 (Original) A sling according to claim 1, wherein the mesh of the support portion is woven and the repositioning means comprises a portion of the support portion that is more tightly woven than another portion of the support portion.

Claim 12 (Original) A sling according to claim 1, wherein the sling comprises a woven mesh and the repositioning means comprises a portion of the mesh that is more tightly woven than another portion of the sling.

Claim 13 (Original) A sling according to claim 1, wherein the repositioning means is constructed to afford transfer at least some of a repositioning force applied to the sling to an end of the support portion.

Claim 14 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling includes synthetic material.

Claim 15 (Original) A sling according to claim 1, wherein the repositioning member includes a coating selected from the group consisting of medicaments, hormones, antibiotics, antimicrobials, dyes, silicone elastomers, polyurethanes, radiopaque substances, anti-bacterial substances or combinations thereof.

Claim 16 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling includes a coating selected from the group consisting of medicaments, hormones, antibiotics, antimicrobials, dyes, silicone elastomers, polyurethanes, radiopaque substances, anti-bacterial substances or combinations thereof.

Claim 17 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the sling is constructed from a bioabsorbable material constructed to retain predetermined properties after implantation for at least a predetermined amount of time.

Claim 18 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the repositioning member is a resorbable material constructed to retain predetermined properties after implantation for at least a predetermined amount of time.

Claim 19 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the repositioning member is woven in a weave pattern along the mesh so that the weave pattern affords an indication of proper sling orientation after implantation.

Claim 20 (Original) A sling according to claim 19 wherein a majority of the repositioning member protrudes above the second major side of the support portion of the sling.

Claim 21 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 further including a sheath.

Claim 22 (Original) A sling according to claim 21 wherein the sheath indicia means for assisting the surgeon is properly orienting the sling relative to the urethra.

Claim 23 (Original) A sling according to claim 22 wherein the sheath includes separation means selected from the group consisting of tear scores, perforations or holes.

Claim 24 (Original) A sling according to claim 21 wherein the sheath comprises first and second sections that overlap adjacent the support portion of the sling.

Claim 25 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling and repositioning means are of contrasting colors and each of the sling and the repositioning means are of a color that contrasts with the physiological environment it will be implanted to assist a surgeon in identifying and distinguishing between the sling, the repositioning means and the physiological environment.

Claim 26 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling mesh is braided.

Claim 27 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling mesh is knitted.

Claim 28 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the sling has a length, the repositioning means comprises a one piece, elongate member threaded in the mesh and extending axially along substantially the entire length of the sling, and wherein the one piece, elongate member is attached to the sling at the ends of the support portion.

Claim 29 (Original) A sling according to claim 28 wherein the sling includes a means for locating and detaching the one piece, elongate member.

Claim 30 (Original) A sling according to claim 29 wherein the means for locating and detaching the one piece, elongate member comprises loops in the elongate, one piece member at the ends of the support portion.

Claim 31 (Original) A sling according to claim 1 wherein the repositioning means comprises a handle situated in the support portion.

Claims 32-37 (Canceled)